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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY REPORTS.

Status and progress of epidemics.

Since last week's issue of the Public Health Reports certain modifications, as shown in reports received, have taken place in the status and progress of epidemics outlined in the summary of sanitary reports. The changes are indicated in the following epitome:

Asiatic cholera.—The boundaries of territory infected with cholera remain confined to the following countries: China, India, the Russian Empire, and Turkey. No definite reports of cholera in China have been received since the announcement of a case at Tientsin in March, though Acting Assistant Surgeon Ransom at Shanghai writes that cases of diarrhea of a suspicious nature have occurred at that port, and that Niuchwang has declared Hongkong infected.

There are indications that the disease is moving westward from its seat in southeast Russia, and a report has been requested from the consul at Moscow on rumored cholera at Kharkof, a city in European Russia, at a railroad junction 420 miles southwest of Moscow. The epidemic of cholera of 1892-1895, in its march into Europe, took a more northerly route, passing from Astrakhan up the Volga River to Nijnii Novgorod and thence to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Yellow fever.—Mexico, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Brazil are the only countries which reports indicate to be infected with yellow fever.

Late telegrams are printed in the present issue regarding reports of yellow fever at Belize, British Honduras, and Puerto Cortez, Honduras.

Passed Assistant Surgeon Wilson writes from Veracruz, May 4, that during the previous fortnight 6 cases of yellow fever and 3 deaths were announced at Tierra Blanca, a small town 57 miles south of Veracruz on the Veracruz and Pacific Railroad. Merida, Yucatan, is reported free from quarantinable disease. The superior council of health for the Republic of Mexico declares, under date of May 10, that aside from the cases at Tierra Blanca there is no yellow fever in Mexico.

In Panama there were, from April 30 to May 13, 11 cases with 2 deaths at the City of Panama, and 1 case, from April 7 to May 6, at Colon. In Rio de Janeiro 84 cases of yellow fever, with 34 deaths, were reported from April 18 to May 2.

Regarding this disease at Rio de Janeiro, Acting Asst. Surg. W. J. S. Stewart at that port states in the Brazilian Review for May 2, 1905, that from January 1 to April 23 there were 198 cases of yellow fever in the city with 75 deaths. In 1904 there were, from the beginning of the calendar year to April 24, 71 cases and 24 deaths, and 118 cases and 49 deaths in the whole year. So that in three months and twenty-three days of the present year the record of last year has been exceeded in both the number of cases and of deaths. The increase has been very steady since the beginning of the year. Doctor Stewart thinks that were it early in the summer season in that region instead of late in autumn, the prevailing conditions would give reason to fear a rather extensive outbreak of fever. Because of the season and the fact that the thoroughness of disinfection and isolation are so much better than in past years and the handling of the disease so much more exactly understood, it is thought that the recrudescence may prove to be at its height now, and that with the advent of cooler weather the disease will speedily decrease.

During the week ending March 25 there was one death from yellow fever in Maracaibo, Venezuela, and another during the week ending May 4.

Bubonic plague.—The status of plague throughout the world has changed but little since last week. The greatest prevalence continues to be in India, where 59,227 seizures with 52,841 deaths occurred during the week ending April 8, and 60,762 cases with 51,786 deaths during the week ending April 15.

The continuance of the epidemic at Aden, where 5 fatal cases were reported for the week ending April 21, and 14 cases, 7 among English soldiers, with 3 deaths, for the week ending April 28, is of great interest, owing to the large number of vessels passing through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal that enter and clear there, in addition to those that discharge and take cargo. Aden, like Gibraltar, is a free port, and hence has become the chief gateway for the trade of neighboring places. In 1900 it suffered from plague, an infection to which it is particularly exposed because of its intimate relations with India, being under the jurisdiction of the governor of Bombay. There is an active trade between Aden and Somali, on the opposite side of the Red Sea, a country which received cholera infection from across the Red Sea in 1890-91, and is now equally exposed to contamination with plague.

Plague in Japan appears to be confined to 1 death, in April, at a

military hospital. The case occurred at Hiroshima, a seaport of Japan, whose importance was greatly increased during the war between Japan and China, owing to the fact that the Emperor of Japan made his headquarters there. The city is situated on the north shore of the Inland Sea, of which, next to Osaka and Hiogo, it is the most prominent commercial center. In Egypt, the latest cases have been reported from Alexandria, Port Said, and the Tukh district. Five cases occurred at Singapore in the first fortnight of April.

One of the latest places announced to be infected with plague is Amoy, China, a treaty port trading principally with the island of Formosa, where, as stated in last week's summary, bubonic plague has prevailed extensively. Amoy, an unsanitary city situated on an island opposite the center of Formosa, is also in commercial relations with Bombay, Bengal, Shanghai, and Formosa. The inhabitants are principally engaged in the coasting trade. The export trade of Amoy, once extensive, has diminished in late years owing to the decreased popularity of China tea. The only other plague-infected Chinese port is Hongkong, where, from January 1 to April 15, 25 cases and 24 deaths were recorded.

East London and King William's Town, Cape Colony, furnished cases of plague for the week ending April 15, the former a solitary case, the latter 3 cases and 1 death. From Newcastle, New South Wales, 2 fresh cases, one fatal, were reported in the first half of April.

Reports from Mauritius (Isle of France) state that 1 case of plague occurred there during the week ending March 16, a significant fact when it is considered that in December there was reported the last of a series of about 700 cases, extending over nearly two years. The climate of Mauritius, a British colony situated in the Indian Ocean to the east of Madagascar, is depressing, and it is said that the natives are feebly resistant against disease.

GENERAL SANITARY INFORMATION.

Mosquito control in California.—The California State board of health, in its monthly leaflet for April, 1905, calls attention to the utility of a crusade against mosquitoes in certain parts of the State for the purpose of minimizing malarial infection. It is stated that in the bay region the predominating species are forms that have become adapted to living in salt water in their early stages and of migrating, when they become adult, in the direction of the prevailing winds.

Last year the marshes about San Rafael were inspected by representatives of the entomological department of the University of California, and those found infested with mosquitoes were treated with crude oil, which gave the most satisfactory results, until late in the year, when lack of funds caused a suspension of work and a conse-

quent increase of mosquitoes. A large marsh area, extending from South San Francisco nearly to San Mateo, is the seat of operations this year. Fresh-water areas, abounding in the region under treatment, are either filled up with earth, drained, or treated with oil.

Decrease in enteric fever and infant mortality in Chicago.—It is officially reported that during the week ending May 20 there was but one death from enteric fever in Chicago. This diminution is attributed to the opening of the drainage channel, which, when complete in all its adjuncts, including intercepting sewers and the Evanston and Calumet subsidiary sewers, will have a flow of 600,000 cubic feet per minute, according to the bulletin of the Chicago health department.

A bulletin prepared by the bureau of vital statistics, health department of the city of Chicago, gives a table of mortality in that city of children under 5 years of age, the figures collected covering the period from 1885 to 1894, inclusive. A division is made into two periods of ten years each. The tables for the first decade show an aggregate of 94,052 deaths for the age group, and for the second decade, 84,853 deaths, the reduction in mortality taking place notwithstanding the fact that the average population increased from 987,614 during the first decennial period to 1,656,600 during the second. The figures for population are according to the United States census.

The health of Habana.—The monthly sanitary and demographic bulletin of the Republic of Cuba for January, 1905, gives a total during the month of 467 deaths, corresponding to the annual rate of 19.98 per mille. Compared with the preceding thirty-one days of December there was an increase in the deaths among children under 1 year of age, principally due to enteritis, and among youths and adults between the ages of 15 and 45, due to tuberculosis. The increase was, however, largely compensated by the decreased mortality between the ages of 1 and 15 years and of persons over 45 years of age.

The only disease that took on epidemic form during the month was measles (182 cases with 1 death). There were 43 cases of scarlet fever reported with 2 deaths, and 27 cases of diphtheria with 5 deaths. Forty-two deaths from enteritis at all ages were recorded, though only 12 were reported before death.

Yellow fever expedition.—The fifteenth tropical expedition of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine started from England for the Amazon in April for the purpose of studying yellow fever. The expedition consists of Dr. Wolferston Thomas and Dr. Anton Breint.

Quarantine regulations.—The maritime authorities of Trieste, Austria, have applied the measures prescribed August 12, 1904, in Austria-Hungary against Pisagua, Chile, and Porto Allegre, Brazil.